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For Immediate Release:

San Bruno Online Petition Calls for CPUC to Hold PG&E Accountable for Gas Explosion

San Bruno, Calif. — The City of San Bruno launched an online petition drive last week that seeks the public's participation in calling on the California Public Utilities Commission to hold Pacific Gas & Electric Company and its shareholders accountable for the fatal Sept. 9, 2010 pipeline explosion in San Bruno and to demand that a penalty levied against PG&E is invested in a safety improvement program to prevent future tragedies in other California communities.

More than three years after the explosion, the CPUC's administrative law judges are expected to issue their recommended penalty in the coming weeks, after which the CPUC's five-member commission will ultimately determine how much PG&E will be forced to pay for the fatal explosion that federal and state investigators determined was entirely preventable and did not have to happen.

San Bruno's petition – which already has more than 6,900 signatures – is available at: www.gaspipelinesafety.org, a website established by the City of San Bruno to petition the CPUC through the free, online petition platform Change.org. City officials said they started the website and petition after members of the public asked how they could voice support for a penalty and fine to force PG&E shareholders to fund repairs to its aging and deadly pipeline infrastructure.

Federal investigators found that PG&E's years of neglected safety repairs resulted in the 2010 explosion that killed eight, injured 66 and destroyed scores of homes in San Bruno. Now, the City of San Carlos is facing a similar problem with PG&E over similar faulty data for a gas

pipeline. PG&E estimates that it doesn't know the safety status of nearly 20 percent of its thousands of miles of gas pipelines in California.

"The public is outraged by PG&E's decades of neglect and misallocation of resources that resulted in eight people losing their lives," said San Bruno Mayor Jim Ruane. "Citizens and cities throughout California are at the same risk of what happened in San Bruno. Now is the time to take action and this petition gives the public that ability."

"Citizens throughout California often ask me and other city leaders what they can do to support San Bruno and change our broken public utility system," Ruane said. "We started this online petition to provide the public an outlet for those concerns, and we encourage everyone to join myself and the members of the San Bruno City Council in signing to support a safe gas pipeline system here and in communities everywhere."

The petition calls on the CPUC to levy the recommended \$2.45 Billion penalty and fine against PG&E shareholders – not ratepayers - for the San Bruno explosion, requiring that shareholders invest in needed repairs to guarantee the safety of PG&E's aging pipeline infrastructure.

In addition, the petition to the CPUC's Executive Director asks the CPUC to assign an Independent Monitor to serve as a statewide safety watchdog. The Independent Monitor would protect public safety at the risk of future negligence by PG&E and weak oversight by the politically appointed CPUC commissioners with close ties to utilities.

Last, the petition implores the CPUC to change the way regulators do business and end regulators' cozy relationships and the conflicts of interest with utility companies. Federal investigators identified these troubling relationships as contributing factors to the disaster in San Bruno.

Every time a member of the public signs the petition, an e-mail will be automatically sent to CPUC Executive Director Paul Clanon, Gov. Jerry Brown and PG&E CEO Tony Earley – sending a direct message that the public is watching and holding them accountable.

"Members of the public, especially those who have been personally affected by PG&E's gross negligence here and across the state, are invested in this process, and they are paying attention," Ruane said. "We hope this petition sends the message to not only the CPUC but also to the Governor of California and to the CEO of PG&E that the public is concerned, and that we are watching to make sure public safety is a priority."

City officials say the public outreach campaign and petition drive at gaspipelinesafety.org is also designed to inform the public about why the ongoing penalty process against PG&E is, more than three years after the explosion, still relevant and important to the safety of communities statewide. Federal investigators determined the explosion to be result of faulty pipeline

construction, bad record-keeping and decades of neglected pipeline safety improvements that continue to threaten the safety of communities across California.

PG&E executives recently admitted to serious record-keeping errors and were sanctioned by the CPUC for failing to inform regulators of these problems on a pipeline in San Carlos, Calif. – problems a PG&E engineer likened to “another San Bruno situation” in an internal e-mail to company officials.

It is projected that PG&E will need to spend nearly \$10 billion in the coming years to test and replace its gas lines because PG&E historically failed to track and maintain those lines. City officials say the proposed \$2.45 billion penalty and fine is important and necessary because PG&E will be forced to spend it on these very improvements.

More importantly, the penalty is structured such that shareholders – not ratepayers -- will be forced to cover these costs, saving ratepayers from shouldering about 20 percent of PG&E’s total capital needs.

“This decision before the CPUC has lasting implications about the safety of our aging pipeline infrastructure,” Ruane said. “We implore members of the public to learn more and support our drive to change a flawed system so that what happened in San Bruno is never permitted to happen again, anywhere.”

Visit www.gaspipelinesafety.org to sign the petition or get more information.